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# Old-Pro Fund-Wheedler in New Job

## William Butts Macomber Jr.

By MICHAEL STERNE

When William Butts Macomber Jr. was Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional relations—he served two terms, from 1957 to 1962 and from 1976 to 1969—he wheedled hundreds of millions of dollars out of an often-reluctant Congress for work many members dismissed as mere “cookie pushing.”

Now he has the job of raising many millions of dollars more, some of it from the Congress, for the cause of art. As the Metropolitan Museum of Art's president, he will be in charge of management and finances while a still-to-be-chosen director will be in charge of curatorial and artistic matters.

Mr. Macomber describes himself as “an interested amateur of art, but far from a professional.” He said he would bring to the job “enthusiasm,” “a lifetime fascination with archeology” going back to student digs in Maine for Indian art and artifacts and “travel and experience in two of the world's greatest outdoor art museums—Jordan and Turkey.”

He served as Ambassador to those two countries, filled, like the Metropolitan, with ancient art—in Jordan from 1961 to 1964 and in Turkey from 1973 to 1977. Those posts were the highlights in a State Department career of 26 years that included service under six Presidents, beginning with Harry S. Truman.

### Champion of Minority Groups

As part of that service, he was Deputy Under Secretary of State for administration from 1969 to 1973. In that post, he earned the respect of his col-

leagues for promoting women and minority-group employees into positions of responsibility and for carrying through what came to be known as “Macomber task forces.”

While younger Foreign Services appreciated that work some were also critical of his support of an order they regarded as a gag rule, requiring them to keep their dissents over policy within the department and not leak their views to Congress.

“His embassy ran like clockwork, and he was a very exacting leader and a tough administrator,” said Altamur Kilio, a Turkish diplomat who knew Mr. Macomber well. “But he also was a very warm, person, and his personal qualities made many friends for the United States in Turkey. We all gave him very high marks for his performance there.”

### Background in Intelligence

Born March 28, 1921, in Rochester, N.Y., Mr. Macomber went to Phillips Andover Academy and then earned degrees at Yale, Harvard and the University of Chicago. He was a Marine Corps lieutenant during World War II, serving as a parachutist with the Office of Strategic Services. When the Korean War began, he returned to the O.S.S., by the reconstituted as the Central Intelligence Agency, and then passed into intelligence work in the State Department.

That experience, sounds a bit cloak-and-daggerish but Mr. Macomber insists that he was no James Bond. “From almost the beginning of my work with the department,” he said, “I was involved with management and diplomacy, with budgets and the Congress.”

That background was cited by Douglas Dillon, the Metropolitan's chairman, as the cluster of qualities

that led to Mr. Macomber's appointment. He described the new president as “eminently qualified to provide the leadership” needed to handle the difficulties the museum anticipates in supporting such costly new projects as the Temple of Dendur, the Rockefeller Wing for Primitive Art and the American Bicentennial Wing.

### Now a Business Enterprise

With a constantly growing budget that rose to \$32.7 million in 1977, and an anticipated deficit of \$400,000 this year, the museum has become a vast but loosely run business enterprise as well as the nation's pre-eminent repository of art. And though Mr. Macomber said he was taking the job with no agenda in mind, the museum's board is known to want him to bring administrative vigor and tighter administration to the institution.

A bit over average height and athletically built, Mr. Macomber is a jogger, a football and boating enthusiast and a keen student of American history. In 1975 he published “The Angel's Game: A Handbook of Modern Diplomacy.” At his summer home in Nanuet, where he has been coaching the high school football team.

Mr. Macomber's wife, the former Phyllis Bernau, was secretary to two Secretaries of State—John Foster Dulles and Dean Rusk. The couple have no children. Their idea of a pleasant evening off—a rare occasion in a busy life—is a quiet dinner for a few close friends.

Though they never have lived in New York, they are looking forward to life here with only one worrying problem: how to accustom three family dogs to apartment living.